

## The Advocis Continuing Education Accreditation Guidelines

### Information and Tools to assist Education Providers in completing the Advocis CE Accreditation Application

#### How Advocis Helps Education Providers

Financial advisors are required to meet a variety of Continuing Education (CE) requirements depending on their license, jurisdiction and professional designations. As an education provider, knowing that your program meets the needs of a competency-based learning program and being able to promote it as having received an impartial third-party CE accreditation adds credibility.

This is how Advocis can help:

- We provide the guidance to help you identify/document the links to competency that your program offers for financial advisors.
- We conduct an impartial confidential accreditation.
- We do this in a timely and cost-effective manner.

#### The Advocis CE Definition

#### Continuing Education Programs must provide competency-based learning for financial advisors

1. **Continuing Education** helps financial advisors stay current and relevant with an evolving professional landscape.
2. **Competency-based learning** focuses on the achievement of specific learning objectives and outcomes linked to professional tasks.
3. **Financial advisors** are those who provide advice within any of the following practice disciplines:
  - Financial Management
  - Investment Management
  - Risk Management
  - Tax Planning
  - Retirement Planning
  - Estate Planning
  - Employee Benefits Planning



Resource: the Advocis Continuing Education Policy



Resource: the Advocis Competency Framework for Continuing Education

# Required Elements for Completion of CE Accreditation Application

## A. Administrative Information

1. Education Provider Contact Information
2. Application Coordinator Contact Information

## B. Accreditation Information

1. Program Title
2. Target Audience for the Program

Financial advisors who provide advice within the following practice disciplines:

- Financial Management
- Investment Management
- Risk Management
- Tax Planning
- Retirement Planning
- Estate Planning
- Employee Benefits Planning

3. Learning program format

- Self-study (Completion requirements must include an assessment in order to be eligible for CE)
  - Courses/programs
  - Archived webinars
- Instructor-led (moderated or facilitated instruction)
  - Courses/programs
  - Seminars / Conferences / Meetings
  - Live webinars
- Group learning
  - Workshops
  - Case study discussions

4. Total and Type of CE Credits being applied for

- a. General Credits – practice management, marketing, financial planning, etc.
- b. Ethics Credits – based on content linked to due diligence or regulatory framework

### CE Credits

- All programs must be at least 15 minutes to be eligible for accreditation (excluding Ethics; which must be 30 minutes in length)
- A maximum of 30 credit hours will be awarded to any one program consistent with the maximum annual CE requirement

**Note:** Time not specifically related to the learning program, i.e., breaks, meals, general question periods, is excluded from determination of the CE credit hour.

## C. Learning Objectives

### 1. Presentation/Learning Activity Title

### 2. Learning Objective(s):

Clearly state the learning objective for each aspect of the education program.



See Learning Objectives: An Advocis Education Resource for guidance on developing a learning objective for our program.

### 3. Clarify the Required Skill Levels:

Clearly state the required skill level or depth of learning that will be required to achieve the stated objective for this program. While we recognize that there are a variety of ways to classify skill levels, the following levels will help us understand the expectations of your learning program as it relates to required skill level:

**Learn** - recognize, identify, distinguish, illustrate, determine

**Apply** - apply, calculate, prepared, produce, predict

**Evaluate** - recommend, compare, justify, validate

### 4. Competency Links

Check all that apply

#### a. Core Competencies – eligible for Technical Credits

- Fact Gathering
- Identifying Objectives
- Plan Selection and Design
- Presenting the Plan
- Implementation
- Ongoing Review



Refer to the Advocis CE Policy (Technical Credits) section of the CE Policy document.

#### b. Underlying Knowledge that is relevant to the target audience – eligible for Ethics (Technical) Credits:

- Due Diligence Requirements
- Regulatory Framework



Refer to the Advocis CE Policy (Ethics Credits) section of the CE Policy.

#### c. Underlying Knowledge that is relevant to the target audience – eligible for General Credits:

- Practice Management
- Marketing
- Products



Refer to the Advocis CE Policy (General Credits) section of the CE Policy.

## 5. Detail the Completion Requirements

There should be a practical way to confirm learning based on the learning objective and the required skill level. The determination of the method should fit the learning.

- a. **Attendance** only... may be appropriate for understanding when and how to apply concepts in practice, but less suitable for applying learning in complex, problem-solving situations
- b. **Assessment**... the recommended direction to confirm learning outcomes. If an assessment is being used, indicate the format and type of questions:

### Format:

- Open-book quiz (if online, confirm if it's timed and other tracking to ensure secure access and verify identity)
- Proctored exam
- Structured interview
- Assignments

### Type of Questions:

- Multiple-choice questions
- Short answer
- Case study
- Essay

**Note:** If the learning program format is self-study the completion requirements must include an assessment in order to be eligible for CE accreditation.

## 6. Full Program Materials

An electronic copy of each of the following items must be attached to the online application:

- a. **Agenda indicating duration of each presentation/learning activity**
- b. **Content** – all material the student will receive/access or that is presented
  - **Conference, Seminar, Presentation/Breakout Session:** Speaker notes, PowerPoint slides, DVD or audio CD
  - **Case Study:** facilitator discussion guide/notes, solutions
  - **Panel:** detailed discussion topics and session agenda
  - **Roundtable discussion:** facilitator/moderator notes, format
  - **Role Playing Session:** format, session agenda, feedback form
  - **Course:** all course materials and any applicable assessments
  - **Online learning:** all course materials and quiz
  - **Webinar:** format, transcript or audio CD
  - **Question Periods:** can only be considered for accreditation based on a transcript or audio CD of the session following delivery
  - **Other:** handouts and any other additional materials supplied to learners
- c. **Copy of assessment questions, where applicable**
- d. **Any additional supporting documents**

## D. Accountability

### 1. Education Provider Accountability

Education providers can only submit an accreditation application for their own programs. This responsibility cannot be delegated to a third party and no third-party submissions will be accepted. The education provider agrees to accept the following responsibilities:

- a. Ensure accuracy of all information submitted on the submission application.
- b. Verify that all materials submitted are the same as the content presented in the course/program for which accreditation is being applied for.
- c. Continue to verify the qualifications of the individual instructors and monitor their effectiveness in the delivery of the material (where an instructor or presenter is required according to the delivery format).
- d. Maintain detailed attendance records for a period of at least three years such as sign-in/out sheets.
- e. Provide certificates to attendees clearly identifying the name of the individual who attended, completion date, CE code, course name and the number of hours for which it has been accredited. Go to [www.iafe.ca](http://www.iafe.ca) for a downloadable CE Certificate template.
- f. Ensure that certificates are never provided to an attendee who did not successfully complete the identified completion requirements.

### 2. Advocis Accountability

- a. Maintain complete confidentiality of all information provided
- b. Keep a record of all material submitted and the accreditation results for a period of seven years
- c. Shred all paper files and delete all electronic files following the seventh year
- d. Provide a 30 business day turn-around for accreditations, based on fully completed application
- e. Return incomplete application within two to three business days
- f. Provide explanation of denied claims to clearly identify deficiencies for the education provider.
- g. Advocis reserves the right to deny an accreditation or to provide an accreditation for fewer credits than applied for. This may occur in instances where:
  - The link to competencies is unclear or inconsistent.
  - Complete information has not been provided.
  - Concepts, approaches, strategies or recommended actions in the learning material violate Ethical First Principles.
- h. Post all accredited programs on the Advocis website unless otherwise stipulated by the education provider
- i. Provide appropriate Advocis CE codes according to the confirmed accreditation
- j. Advocis reserves the right to recall any accreditation upon receipt of unresolved complaints from attendees. No accreditation refunds will be provided

## E. Accreditation Fee Structure

Administration Fee	\$50 (per submission) + HST – this fee covers the administrative costs of opening the file, updating database, communication, invoicing, etc.
Minimum Accreditation Fee	\$50 + HST (15 minutes)
3-Day Business Rush Fee	\$500 + GST – in addition to the administrative and accreditation fees

- All fees are non-refundable, including the accreditation fee in situations where the accreditation is not awarded as applied for.
- No charge will be levied for minor program changes such as updates to calculations/examples, changes of presentation order.

### Credit/Fee Chart

Sample Program Duration	Credit	Credit Fee*
15 Minutes	0.25	\$50
30 Minutes	.5	\$75
45 Minutes	.75	\$75
60 Minutes	1	\$75
1 Hour, 15 Minutes	1.25	\$125
1 Hour, 30 Minutes	1.5	\$150
1 Hour, 45 Minutes	1.75	\$150
2 Hours	2	\$150

\* In addition to the \$50 application fee

## F. Validity Period for Accreditations

### Two years

- No charges will be levied for minor program changes occurring during the accreditation period. However, we do request that documentation of the changes is submitted for our files.

***To apply for an accreditation of your education program, visit [www.iafe.ca](http://www.iafe.ca) for access to our online application.***



Resource: All resources can be found at [www.iafe.ca](http://www.iafe.ca)